

Message Text

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51

ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SAB-01 INRE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 -03 NSAE-00 NSC-10

PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20 IO-14 DRC-01 /099 W

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O 031940Z JAN 74

FM AMEMBASSY PANAMA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9418

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EO 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR PN PQ US

SUBJ: RESUMPTION OF CANAL TREATY NEGOTIATIONS:

FOREIGN MINISTER'S COMMENTS ON SAN

CLEMENTE ANNOUNCEMENT

REF: A) PANAMA 0020; B) FBIS PANAMA 301442Z DEC 73

1. THERE FOLLOWS AN ENGLISH TRANSLATION OF FOREIGN MINISTER JUAN ANTONIO TACK'S COMMENTS, WHICH WERE GIVEN PROMINENT TREATMENT IN NEARLY ALL PANAMANIAN PAPERS ON DECEMBER 30 AND 31, FOLLOWING PRESIDENT NIXON'S ANNOUNCEMENT ON DECEMBER 28 AT SAN CLEMENTE CONCERNING HIS INTENTION TO SEEK LEGISLATION AUTHORIZING THE TRANSFER OF OLD AND NEW FRANCE FIELDS TO PANAMANIAN JURISDICTION.

2. BEGIN QUOTE: ACCORDING TO THE STATEMENT WHICH PRESIDENT NIXON HAS RELEASED, HE INTENDS TO SUBMIT TO THE U.S. CONGRESS CERTAIN LEGISLATION AIMED AT BRINGING UP TO DATE RELATIONS BETWEEN PANAMA AND THE UNITED STATES REGARDING THAT PART OF PANAMANIAN TERRITORY WHICH IS KNOWN AS THE PANAMA CANAL ZONE. THIS WOULD COMPLEMENT THE NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN THE TWO NATIONS REGARDING A NEW TREATY CONCERNING THE INTEROCEANIC CANAL WHICH IS, UN-
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QUESTIONABLY, FUNDAMENTAL TO PANAMA IN OUR PERMANENT STRUGGLE FOR THE ABROGATION OF THE 1903 TREATY.

"IN THE TERMS OF THAT STATEMENT THE LEGISLATIVE PROPOSALS WERE RECOMMENDED TO PRESIDENT NIXON BY AMBASSADOR ELLSWORTH BUNKER, WHO TOLD ME DURING THE MEETINGS HE HELD WITH ME IN PANAMA AT THE END OF LAST MONTH THAT HE WOULD DO THIS.

".EVERYTHING SEEMS TO INDICATE THAT IT IS A QUESTION OF STRICTLY UNILATERAL MEASURES WHICH THE U.S. GOVERNMENT HAS DECIDED TO ADOPT TO INDICATE A NEW ATTITUDE TOWARD PANAMA IN THE SUBSEQUENT DEVELOPMENT OF THE NEGOTIATIONS REGARDING THE TREATY CONCERNING THE INTEROCEANIC CANAL WHICH SHOULD BE CONTINUED ON THE BASIS OF THE DEEPEST RESPECT FOR THE DIGNITY OF THE REPUBLIC OF PANAMA. END QUOTE.

3. COMMENT. TACK AVOIDED CAREFULLY SPECIFIC REFERENCE TO THE PROPERTIES AND LOTTERY AND STRESSED THE FACT THAT U.S. LEGISLATION (TIME CONSUMING) IS REQUIRED, PERHAPS TO AVOID FALSE HOPES. HE POINTS UP THE UNILATERAL ASPECT OF THE PROPOSAL, "COMPLEMENTARY" TO THE NEGOTIATIONS, AS EVIDENCE OF A NEW AND FRESH ATTITUDE ON THE PART OF THE USG IN DEALING WITH PANAMA. BUT HE DOES NOT LOSE SIGHT OF THAT WHICH IS "FUNDAMENTAL" FOR PANAMA -- THE TERMINATION OF THE 1903 TREATY. TACK'S GUARDED STATEMENT APPEARS DESIGNED TO WARD OFF CHARGES (ALREADY ON THE RUMOR CIRCUIT) OF "SELL OUT" FROM PRESENT AND POTENTIAL POLITICAL OPPONENTS OF THE GOP.
DANIELS

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: AGREEMENTS, FOREIGN POLICY POSITION, NEGOTIATIONS, PANAMA CANAL TREATY
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 03 JAN 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: MorefiRH
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974PANAMA00023
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: PANAMA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740164/aaaacimo.tel
Line Count: 90
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: A) PANAMA 0020; B) FBIS PANAMA 30144, 2Z DEC 73
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: MorefiRH
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 18 SEP 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <18 SEP 2002 by elyme>; APPROVED <18-Sep-2002 by MorefiRH>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: RESUMPTION OF CANAL TREATY NEGOTIATIONS: FOREIGN MINISTER'S COMMENTS ON SAN
TAGS: PFOR, PN, PQ, US
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005